



March 12, 1998

The Honorable Pete Wilson  
Governor  
State of California  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, California 95814

The Honorable Bruce Babbitt  
Secretary of Interior  
U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Governor Wilson and Secretary Babbitt:

I am writing in regard to the CALFED Bay-Delta Program draft programmatic environmental report scheduled to be released by the State of California and U.S. agencies next week. The CALFED report analyzes several alternative plans, and will identify Alternative 3, with certain limitations, as the most promising plan to resolve the chronic environmental and related water supply problems of the Bay-Delta estuary.

All of California's interests involved in the CALFED effort recognize the inherent difficulty in designing a solution for the Bay-Delta estuary that balances California's economic and environmental needs. Your commitment to the CALFED program has been instrumental in maintaining the state-federal partnership, and is critical to the program's eventual success.

We are encouraged the draft report will recommend development of new water storage projects in Northern California, and establishment of a broad program to assist agricultural water suppliers to build fish screens for their diversions. We will provide more specific comments with respect to how best to accomplish these projects and programs in the near future.

Although considerable progress has been reached on certain CALFED program elements, including the conveyance facilities and ecosystem restoration plan, we are concerned

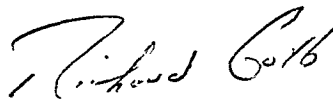
minimal progress has been achieved in developing clear, legal guarantees or "assurances" on how the entire program will be implemented. Specific legal assurances must be developed to guide the CALFED program through implementation on the broad scope of activities that will be included in its final plan.

NCWA has urged CALFED to implement specific assurances regarding California's water rights priority system, area-of-origin protections, and other components in the plan. These assurances are essential, and must be implemented prior to completion of the proposed facility and restoration elements to ensure the final plan will be administered in a manner that equitably benefits Northern California's economy and environment.

NCWA has actively supported Bay-Delta restoration initiatives, as a signatory to the 1994 Bay-Delta Accord, and a participant in drafting Proposition 204 and the 1996 California Bay-Delta Environmental Enhancement and Water Security Act. NCWA will continue our active role in assisting CALFED to develop a solution that will improve habitat for fish and wildlife species that rely upon the waters of the Bay-Delta ecosystem, and to improve reliability and water supplies for California's cities, businesses and farms.

It's our belief the CALFED program is the best opportunity to achieve these goals. We appreciate your personal investment in this program, and thank you for your consideration of our initial perspective on CALFED's draft report.

Sincerely,



Richard Golb  
Executive Director